

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR., Wisconsin
CHAIRMAN

HENRY J. HYDE, Illinois
HOWARD COBLE, North Carolina
LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas
ELTON GALLEGLY, California
BOB GOODLATTE, Virginia
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio
WILLIAM L. JENKINS, Tennessee
CHRIS CANNON, Utah
SPENCER BACHUS, Alabama
JOHN N. HOSTETTLER, Indiana
MARK GREEN, Wisconsin
RIC KELLER, Florida
MELISSA A. HART, Pennsylvania
JEFF FLAKE, Arizona
MIKE PENCE, Indiana
J. RANDY FORBES, Virginia
STEVE KING, Iowa
JOHN R. CARTER, Texas
TOM FEENEY, Florida
MARSHA BLACKBURN, Tennessee

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-3951

<http://www.house.gov/judiciary>

September 20, 2004

JOHN CONYERS, JR., Michigan
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

HOWARD L. BERMAN, California
RICK BOUCHER, Virginia
JERROLD NADLER, New York
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, Virginia
MELVIN L. WATT, North Carolina
ZOE LOFGREN, California
SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Texas
MAXINE WATERS, California
MARTIN T. MEEHAN, Massachusetts
WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT, Massachusetts
ROBERT WEXLER, Florida
TAMMY BALDWIN, Wisconsin
ANTHONY D. WEINER, New York
ADAM B. SCHIFF, California
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, California

The Honorable Christopher Cox
Chairman
Select Committee on Homeland Security
LA-202 Adams – LOC
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cox:

I read with great interest your letter to House Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Telecommunications Chairman Fred Upton calling for an investigation into allegations that CBS inadvertently used forged documents in reporting about irregularities in the President's National Guard record.

While I certainly share your concern about the use of forgeries to convey an inaccurate or misleading impression to the public, I wanted to call to your attention and request that you hold hearings on another far more pressing matter, which should be of interest to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee.

As you know, in October of 2002 an Italian journalist handed over to the United States Embassy in Italy documents purporting to show that Iraq had purchased uranium from Niger. These documents were almost immediately recognized by State Department and Central Intelligence Agency officials as fraudulent and this supposition was subsequently confirmed by former Ambassador Joseph Wilson. Yet, a reference to these documents, already discredited, somehow appeared in the President's State of the Union Address in 2003, as the President made his case for going to war with Iraq when he said "[t]he British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." Since the President made that statement, which high ranking Administration officials knew to be misleading, over 1,000 American soldiers have died in the Iraq war; and, by the end of 2004, the war's cost to the American taxpayer will likely exceed \$152 billion.

Yet, to date, the origins of that document remain unknown as no investigation has conclusively determined who created these forgeries and why they were created. In your letter,

The Honorable Christopher Cox
Page 2
September 20, 2004

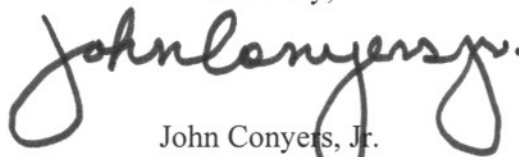
you express disdain that CBS has yet to reveal the sources of the documents you believe are forged. I assume in a matter of even greater national import, the life and death of American troops, you are equally disdainful of the Administration's lack of candor about the Iraq/Niger forgeries and you are determined to get to the bottom of this matter.

While prior to the Iraq war, as the 9/11 Commission has made clear, there were no operational links between Iraq and Al Qaeda, it is now clear that Al Qaeda is flourishing in Iraq. It has been well documented that vital resources that were being used to fight Al Qaeda where it was hiding, in Afghanistan, were diverted to a place without Al Qaeda ties, Iraq. As a result, we are far less safe at home because of this war.

As Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, I believe this should be of particular concern to you. You have the ability to hold hearings and subpoena documents with respect to these matters. I urge you to do so at the earliest possible moment. As you indicate in your letter to Chairman Upton, there is a short time until Congress adjourns. Echoing your letter, I strongly urge that your Committee move with all deliberate speed to uncover the facts.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter within the Committee's jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Conyers, Jr." in a cursive style.

John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member